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the Lineman

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION - U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



GEORGIA INSTRUCTOR DIES

William G. Sanders, Safety and Job Training Instructor, Georgia, died last month after a short illness. Bill, as he was known to the co-operative linemen in Georgia, had done an excellent job in the safety and job training field and will be long remembered by the men with whom he worked.

The Lineman and the other State Safety and Job Training Instructors extend our sympathy to Mrs. Sanders and regret that Bill could not have been spared to carry on the fine work which he had started.



Poison Plants Mean Lost Time

Poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac are a source of annoyance and lost time to men who work the lines and clear right-of-way. Fortunately the poisoning agent or chemical of each of these three plants is the same. For that reason protective measures and treatment for poison ivy will be equally effective for poison oak and poison sumac. (It has also been discovered that this same poison chemical is present in the cashew nut shell from which a variety of insulating varnish and rubber-like products, some used by the electrical equipment manufacturing industry, are made.)

The U. S. Public Health Service noted the large amount of time reported lost to the various State Compensation Boards due to skin irritation of the poison ivy, oak and sumac type. It decided to search for a protective substance which would reduce this lost time. The men assigned to the research set out to discover a harmless chemical which could be put on the hands and other exposed parts of the body. This chemical to be effective should be able to change the poison chemical in poison ivy, oak and sumac into a harmless chemical which would not irritate the skin.

The U. S. Public Health Service found such a chemical. Louis Schwartz, Medical Director; Leon H. Warren, Acting Assistant Surgeon, and Frederick H. Goldman, Associate Chemist, made their report to the Third Annual Conference of Government Hygienists at the National Institute of Health, Bethesda, Md., May 1, 1940.

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NATIONAL FARM SAFETY WEEK, 1948

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

WHEREAS needless hazards on the farms of our Nation continue to cause thousands of accidents each year which could be prevented by a positive safety program, and

WHEREAS these accidents, which annually cause some 18,000 farm residents to lose their lives, constitute an unnecessary and tragic waste of human life; and

WHEREAS the reduction of accidents to a minimum cannot be achieved without the vigilance and efforts of those who are endangered:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, HARRY S. TRUMAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby call upon the Nation to observe the week commencing July 25, 1948, as National Farm Safety Week. I urgently request each member of every American farm family to accept responsibility for eliminating at least one possible source of accidents during that week. I also ask all organizations and persons interested in farm life and welfare to join in a concerted attack upon these menaces to the lives and happiness of American farmers and their families.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this 16th day of April in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and forty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and seventy-second.



By the President:

Robert H. Smith
Acting Secretary of State

Harry S. Truman

Dakotas Adopt, Arizona Gets Ready

North and South Dakota managers adopted a Safety and Job Training program at their statewide meetings in May. Advisory Committees were appointed and a full time instructor will be on the job as soon as two qualified men can be obtained.

A. B. Shehee, REA field safety engineer, conducted model safety and job training meetings on each of the systems in Arizona during May. The Arizona managers are working out the details of a statewide program.

It Pays To Be Safe

-- Editorial --

The following quotation is from the January 1946 issue of The Lineman:

"The national trend is toward more accidents in the home and on the highway. The number of industrial accidents, however, is not increasing nationally. Some industries will undoubtedly have far less accidents than during the war emergency. Less haste and the employment of more skilled personnel will be important in continuing this decrease.

"Other industries may have more accidents during the coming year, especially in those now undergoing great expansion. The electrical industry is a good example.

"Hampered by lack of materials during the war years, we have been merely holding the line-maintaining service to existing members but unable to supply the growing demand of our prospective new members.

"We are now faced with a construction program designed to 'catch up'; to build in one or two years the facilities which should normally have been built over a four-or five-year period.

"We may be tempted to cut corners - get the job done - because, in addition to this new construction, the same old operation and maintenance problems will be with us. Experience indicates that the safe way will always be the quick way to these jobs."

Both 1946 and 1947 were high accident years in the electrical industry as a whole. 1947 was the worst year in REA borrowers' history from the standpoint of the total number of disabling and fatal accidents.

However, when the exposure factor is taken into consideration the 1947 record was not as bad as the gross figures would indicate. Many REA borrowers have increased their outside employees from six or less on V-J Day, to 18, 30, 50 or more. It was inevitable that accidents should increase in somewhat the same proportion. An even greater increase seemed likely because of the lack of skilled workmen and the necessity for filling up crews with semi-skilled or unskilled men.

For the above reasons 1946 and 1947 were bad years from a total accident standpoint. However, the first six months of 1948 was as good as the previous two years was bad. Only 5 fatal accidents were reported by REA borrowers for the period January 1, 1948 to June 30, 1948. This is a 300% reduction over the same 6 months' period of 1947.

Letters To The Lineman

The Lineman
Rural Electrification Administration
Washington D. C.

Gentlemen:

I have compiled a few facts and figures estimating the cost in time wasted. I thought this might be of interest to you and that you might like to publish it, if it is suitable.

Considering a crew consists of six (6) men and the average cost of the crew at seventy cents (70¢) per hour.

If crew waste thirty (30) minutes per day, the cost in dollars and cents would be \$2.10 per day. Estimating the working days at 260 for a year would be \$546.00.

This lost time is generally thought of as: Loafing, unnecessary conversation or time out for refreshments. But these are not the most common causes for lost time. It is my belief that twice this amount is lost by an error on some employee's part each day, which would hinder or slow down the entire crew, especially so, if it comes from poor planning on the foreman's part. If our personnel totals approximately twelve (12) crews, this size, using the figure \$2.10 per day, or \$546.00 per year, times 12 would equal \$6,552.00 in time wasted.

If each individual employee would take steps to avoid this needless waste, it no doubt would encourage promotions and increases in pay.

Yours truly,

/s/ John D. Pinkerton
Construction Supt.
The Middle Tennessee Electric
Membership Corporation
Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Editor's Note:

Inefficiency is but one of the penalties of poor planning. Failure to plan properly also encourages accidents. The lack of proper planning often results in the absence of essential material, tools and protective devices. This encourages hazardous short cuts, and the occasional 'maybe we can get by with it this time' attitude.

This record is especially significant in view of the fact that there was an increase in man-hours worked during this period. Therefore, the reduced fatal accident figure is not the result of decreased exposure. Rather, it is caused by the use of safer work practices by the men who construct, operate and maintain the lines.

Hard Luck Harry

Hard-Luck Harry is drawn by George Perkins, Jr., Manager of the Prairie Power Cooperative, Inc., Fairfield, Idaho.

Mr. Perkins was employed to obtain easements and wiring contracts before any of the lines were built. He also worked with the engineer surveying the lines and as book-keeper. At the end of the second year he became manager of the new system when the original manager, Eddie J. Williams, resigned to manage a cooperative system at Lewiston, Idaho.

Mr. Perkins draws cartoons as a hobby. He submitted to R. E. A. a 'Mr. Smith Goes to Town' cartoon which was accepted for publication in R. E. News.

During the summer of 1945, Mr. Perkins was doing some work around the office with a step ladder. He forgot to remove the hammer which he had left on the top platform of the ladder. When he attempted to move the ladder the hammer slid off and cut a gash in his forehead. When his head quit hurting he had an idea - a safety cartoon for The Lineman. This cartoon appeared in the August 1945 issue of The Lineman and is reproduced here.



This Was The First Hard Luck Harry

The Lineman needed more cartoons and before the end of 1945, Mr. Perkins had sent in a series of cartoons called 'Hard-Luck Harry', a Mortimer Snerd sort of individual who does everything backwards.

George Perkins, like the majority of the rural system managers, has a sincere interest

POISON PLANTS - Continued

The following quotation was taken from that report:

"In order to test the value of the protective cream against growing poison ivy the hands and the right forearm of two of the susceptible subjects (one of whom was the most susceptible of all tested), were smeared with the protective ointment. Both subjects then plucked poison ivy leaves as they were found growing around a tree. In addition to this, the leaves were handled and pressed against the cream-protected areas of the forearms of both subjects, brushed up and down (with the other protected hand) and allowed to remain one-half hour on one subject, and several minutes on the other. One hour later the protective cream was washed off with water and no reactions followed.

Conclusions

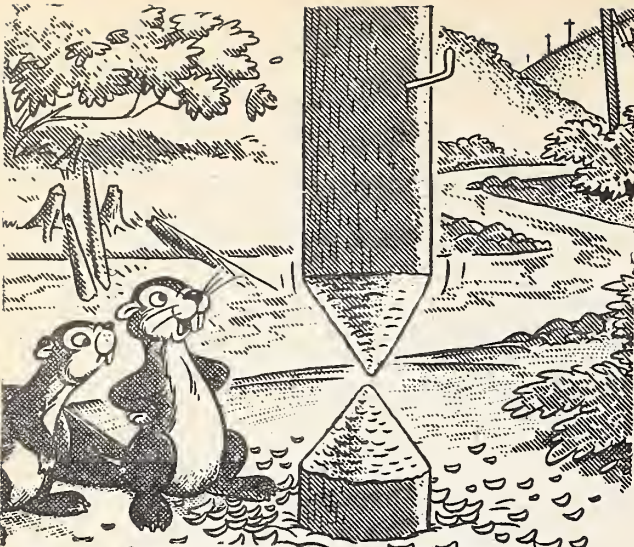
1. An alkaline vanishing cream containing a nonirritant oxidizing agent, such as sodium perborate or potassium periodate is an effective preventive against poison ivy dermatitis.
2. It should be well rubbed into the skin of the arms and face of workers before exposure to poison ivy. This procedure leaves a deposit of the powdered oxidant on the skin.
3. The protective cream should be allowed to remain on until the noon hour when it should be removed by washing with soap and water; this will emulsify the vanishing cream in the pores of the skin and wash away from within outward whatever toxin may be in the pores or on the skin.
4. The cream should be reapplied again after the lunch hour and again washed off in the evening when work is over.
5. This vanishing cream should be freshly prepared at least once in 2 weeks to avoid deterioration. However, the cream used in our experiments was slightly discolored but still active after 1 month.

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in the welfare of the men who construct, operate and maintain the rural lines of America.

Mr. Perkins will welcome any suggestions for cartoons from the readers of The Lineman. Such cartoons when printed will carry the name of the individual and the system from whom the idea was received. The office force is encouraged to send in ideas too. Mail your suggestions to:

George Perkins, Jr., Manager
Prairie Power Cooperative, Inc.
Fairfield, Idaho



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"That's funny - it never acted that way before."
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Beavers are not a serious threat to pole lines. But danger from rot, termites and other insects is. Much of such damage occurs either just below or just above the groundline and is not easily observed. Proper treatment of the pole with coal-tar creosote or any approved substitute preservative will protect it from such damage for many years but eventually the treatment becomes ineffective. If linemen do not develop the habit of inspecting each pole they climb to determine its soundness at the groundline and just below pole-falling accidents will increase as the lines grow older. REA Co-op lines are new, comparatively speaking. The few accidents caused by poles falling with linemen have been mostly on acquired systems of much greater age than the oldest pole in an REA-financed system.



Pictured above at a recent Texas Safety and Training Advisory Committee Meeting are (l. to r.) Ed Nauert, Texas Safety and Job Training Instructor; Osie Cauble, manager of Navarre County Electric Co-op; and E. L. Williams, Director, Industrial Extension Service, Texas A & M College.

Further experimentation continued during 1941, 1942, 1943 and 1945. This experimentation resulted in a much improved formula for the protective cream. The original protective cream had to be made fresh every two or three weeks to be potent. The new formula retains its protective qualities for a considerably longer period of time.

Our attention has been called to only one manufacturer, the West Disinfecting Co., 42 West St., Long Island City 1, New York, which is now offering this protective cream for sale. However, there may be others and their names will be provided when and if they are brought to our attention. The cream is put up in several different size packages and carries an expiration date after which the cream may lose its effectiveness.

The formula is:

Shellac	13 parts
Isopropanol	31 "
Linseed oil	4 "
Titan oxide	12 "
Sodium perborate	13 "
Talcum	20 "
Carbitol	3 "

Poisoning from plants is usually acquired in one of three ways:

1. Direct skin contact with leaves or stem.
2. By touching clothes, tools or other objects which have contacted the plant.
3. By coming in contact with smoke from a fire in which the poison plant is burned.

After the protective cream has been washed from the hands, clothing and tools should not be handled if they have contacted the poison plant as poisoning can be obtained this way (second hand so to speak.)

Full information on this subject can be obtained from the following pamphlets from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.:

		price
U. S. Public Health Bulletin	# 161 -	10¢
" " " "	# 2183 -	10¢
" " " "	# 2370 -	5¢
" " " "	# 2278 -	5¢
U. S. Department of Agriculture Bulletin	# 1972 -	10¢

The Lineman is published monthly in the interest of safety for employees of REA-financed systems. Ralph A. C. Hill, Editor; Frank H. La Master, Associate Editor.